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WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) today reacted to Attorney General Eric Holder's announcement that the US Justice Department is opening formal criminal and civil investigations into the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster.

"From what we already know about the events leading up to the Deepwater Horizon disaster, there is reason to believe that BP, government agencies and others showed a reckless disregard for the lives of their workers, the livelihoods of Louisiana families and the safety of America's wetlands" Congressman Melancon said. "Criminal and civil investigations are the right step forward. Anyone who is found responsible for causing the deaths of the 11 people and the largest oil spill in our nation's history should be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law."

Congressman Melancon has been leading efforts in Louisiana to coordinate the private, federal, state, and local response to the oil leak caused by the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil platform one month ago. He represents in Congress the areas of coastal Louisiana most directly affected by the oil leak, including Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Terrebonne, Lafourche and southern Jefferson Parishes. The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana's Third Congressional District.

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